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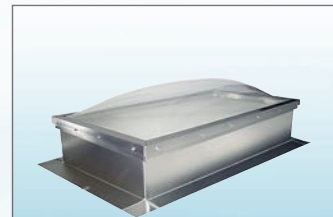
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ABOVE MAJORA CARTER RECENTLY SPOKE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO'S HART HOUSE ABOUT LINKING ECONOMIC ACTIVITY WITH SUSTAINABLE DESIGN PRINCIPLES.

It's not easy being green. More to the point, being green is no longer good enough. In today's world, designing a building that achieves LEED status simply demonstrates your commitment to designing responsibly. Do you really want to design cutting-edge sustainable architecture? If so, then you should think about creative ways of collaborating with a new generation of passionate community leaders—individuals and organizations that link green-collar jobs with the health and well-being of our urban environments.

One such leader is Majora Carter. Since 2001, her grassroots organization, Sustainable South Bronx (SSBx), has challenged plans for wrong-headed ideas to build power plants, prisons, sewage-treatment facilities and landfills in or adjacent to economically sensitive neighbourhoods. Carter's presentation at the University of Toronto in March demonstrated that a convincing vision for the future of our cities is going to come from people like her, and not from city planners. As architects, we should engage with these visionaries, channelling their strengths into quality-based designs for housing, small commercial buildings, parks and public space.

Carter's benchmark project, the South Bronx Greenway Project, secured \$30 million to essentially transform a garbage dump into a riverside park. Her initiatives also guided the creation of a local furniture manufacturer that recycles wooden pallets from the local food terminal that would otherwise be thrown away. Fostering design-related businesses and local employment, this is creativity working at its best.

Buoyed by her success at SSBx where she pioneered green-collar job training and placement systems in environmentally and economically challenged communities, Carter recently formed her own consulting firm. Known as the Majora Carter Group, she is applying her interest and experience in putting land use, energy, transportation, water and waste policy into action across the United States. She has turned her attention towards helping civic, business and nonprofit groups understand how their indi-

vidual interests can be channelled into tangible investments in the green economy.

Economic growth combined with sustainable design will increasingly become a priority for the design professions, especially as society continues to link the two concepts together. In Toronto, the Mayor's Tower Renewal office is working on its own program of economic renewal that includes the retrofitting of several 1960s-era apartment buildings to improve their energy efficiency. When combined with increased opportunities for local business and employment, Toronto will spur the development of truly sustainable and environmentally friendly design initiatives.

During the 2008 Canadian federal elections—before the global economic meltdown—the leader of the Green Party, Elizabeth May, campaigned on a platform linking green-collar jobs with an overall strategy to make our cities more sustainable. Like Carter, May spoke of encouraging the manufacture of wind turbines instead of SUVs and creating economic opportunities close to where people live. However, it will likely take a change of government in Canada to recognize the links between our global recession and environmental sustainability. In March, the Harper government published a 120-page report outlining its response to the global economic crisis. The document references “green” a dozen times, but “green” was linked with “infrastructure” in 10 out of 12 instances. The report failed to define “green infrastructure” altogether.

Architects design buildings every day based on a needs assessment that might include climate, local alternative energy market assessments, parks acreage per person, storm-water management strategies, and access to transportation. We are perfectly positioned to broker big changes, should we join forces with organizations concerned with the environment. Those who dismiss this form of collaboration will simply be left behind to fall in line with the demands of commonplace developers.

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PROJECTS

Vancouver architect Tony Robins develops prefabricated home system.

Vancouver architect Tony Robins has launched his own 20,000-square-foot factory to produce the buildings he designs. Centering the construction process within a factory, Preform Construction—the company Robins has formed with partners Marc Isaac and Ryan Spong—is making sound logistic, economic, and green sense. The prefab houses are split into modules of up to 60 feet long and shipped by truck or barge, then assembled on site. They come finished right down to the drywall being painted, and the light fixtures and appliances already in place. The company's first venture, shipping a "Living Unit" comprising a single module to the BC Home Show, proved there needn't be a drywall crack in sight. And it only took the team two months from design sketch to delivery, one month after opening the facility. For a large house, the normal construction time will be cut in half. It is also cheaper by an estimated 15% for a local siting, due to factory efficiencies. The 500-square-foot one-bedroom module is green and smart, with R50 blown insulation in the walls, a green roof, grey-water use for the toilet cistern, and an instantaneous hot water heater for the taps and in-floor heating. The temperature of the module can also be changed remotely from any computer. While the unit clearly lends itself to installation on a recreational property, the soon-to-be-legal Vancouver laneway housing is an obvious future market.

www.preformconstruction.com

Cannon Design's Sparkling Hill Resort and Wellness Centre under construction.

Cannon Design has just finished construction documents for the Sparkling Hill Resort and Wellness Centre, an exceptional new resort located on a spectacular 188-acre mountaintop site overlooking Okanagan Lake in Vernon, British Columbia. At the heart of this 150-room hotel is a 20,000-square-foot Wellness Centre providing specialized European treatments. Guest rooms are designed to provide a distinctive experience which challenges conventional expectations, with floor-to-ceiling windows emphasizing the views from the mountaintop. The crystalline theme is reinforced in the fixtures, finishes and lighting throughout the entire hotel, with extensive use of Swarovski crystals and lighting systems. Cannon Design and SSDG collaborated throughout the process with Swarovski design leader Andy Altmeier and his staff to integrate the crystal vocabulary into the architecture, with the 18-metre-high window wall of the lobby forming the most spectacular example. The hotel sits on a geo-exchange



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ABOVE CANNON DESIGN'S SPARKLING HILL RESORT AND WELLNESS CENTRE WILL FURTHER ENTRENCH BC'S LAKE OKANAGAN AS A LUXURY TOURIST DESTINATION. **BELOW** PREFORM CONSTRUCTION IS MARKETING PRE-FABRICATED HOMES THAT CAN BE BUILT QUICKLY AND MORE ECONOMICALLY THAN TRADITIONAL CONSTRUCTION METHODS.

field which is projected to provide approximately 110% of the hotel's required heating and cooling energy. Completion is slated for 2010 and the estimated project cost is \$32 million.

AWARDS

2009 Canadian Society of Landscape Architects Awards of Excellence.

The annual awards program hosted by the University of Manitoba Department of Landscape Architecture netted 56 entries. Thirteen projects received national awards and 12 projects received regional awards. Four projects received National Honour Awards: La Promenade Samuel-De

Champlain in Quebec City by the consortium Daoust Lestage inc./Williams Asselin Ackaoui/Option Aménagement; Outremont Campus at the Université de Montréal by Groupe Cardinal Hardy and Provencher Roy + Associés architectes; Lake Ontario Park Master Plan in Toronto by field operations; and Point Pleasant Park Comprehensive Plan in Halifax by Ekistics Planning and Design, NIP paysage and HRM. Six projects received National Merit Awards: Lakeview Community Education and Landscape Politics project in Mississauga by the Centre for Landscape Research at the University of Toronto; *Ground: the Landscape Architect Quarterly* by the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects;



ROGER BROOKS

Green Infrastructure in Calgary's Mobility Corridors by the Design Centre for Sustainability at the University of British Columbia; Southeast False Creek Waterfront—Phase 1 in Vancouver by PwL Partnership Landscape Architects Ltd.; Garden City Play Environment in Richmond by space2place design inc.; and Spadina Wave Deck in Toronto by West 8 + DTAH (du Toit Allsopp Hillier).

<http://csla.ca/site/index.php?q=en/node/339>

2009 OAA award winners announced.

The Ontario Association of Architects recently announced the winners of their annual awards program. Several projects were recognized as achieving design excellence, and are listed on the OAA website. The Landmark Award was given to Toronto's St. Lawrence Neighbourhood 1977-82 in Toronto. raw design Inc. was recognized as the Best Emerging Practice, while John Bobaljik received the G. Randy Roberts Service Award. Norman D. Macdonald received the distinction of Honour Roll, and Jerome Markson was named to the Order of da Vinci.

www.oaa.on.ca

2009 Toronto Urban Design Awards.

Every other year, the City of Toronto holds Urban Design Awards to acknowledge the significant contribution that architects, landscape archi-

tect, urban designers, artists, design students, and city builders make to the look and livability of the city. All entries will be showcased in an exhibition at City Hall from September 14-21, 2009, and award winners will be announced and celebrated at a ceremony on September 21, 2009. The submission deadline is 4:00pm on Tuesday, May 19, 2009. Entries will be accepted in the following seven categories: Elements; Buildings in Context—Private; Buildings in Context—Public; Small Open Spaces; Large Places and Neighbourhood Designs; Visions and Master Plans; and Student Projects. This year's jury is comprised of Ian Chodikoff, editor of *Canadian Architect* magazine; Jack Diamond, principal of Diamond & Schmitt Architects Inc., Eha Naylor, principal of of ENvision—The Hough Group Limited, and Michael Van Valkenburgh, principal of Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates Inc.

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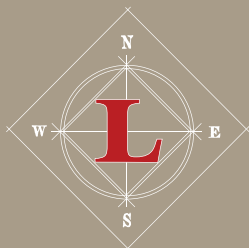
WHAT'S NEW

CMHC's EQuilibrium Sustainable Housing Demonstration Initiative expands into BC and Atlantic Canada.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) launched the EQuilibrium Sustainable Housing Demonstration Initiative in May 2006 to support the construction of homes that balance

the needs of our built and natural environments. EQuilibrium homes bring together, under one roof, the principles of occupant health and comfort, energy efficiency, renewable energy production, resource conservation, reduced environmental impact and affordability. Now, three new builder and developer teams in British Columbia and Atlantic Canada have been chosen to take part in the EQuilibrium initiative, bringing their visions for an energy-efficient, eco-friendly future to reality. The winning projects include: the Green Dream Home (Kamloops, BC)—a solar-powered home that is designed by the Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA) Central Interior, and Thompson Rivers University (TRU) to take advantage of one of Canada's sunniest cities; Harmony House (Burnaby, BC)—a two-storey ultra-efficient house with an in-law suite that is created by Habitat Design + Consulting Ltd. and Insightful Healthy Homes Inc. to suit the Lower Mainland's unique climate; and the Moncton VISION Home (Moncton, NB)—a highly efficient home designed by AlternaHome Solutions Inc. and VISION Land Developments Ltd. When they are complete, these three projects will join the 12 other demonstration homes that are currently being planned, built or that are already open for visitors across the country, making the EQuilibrium initiative truly national in scope.

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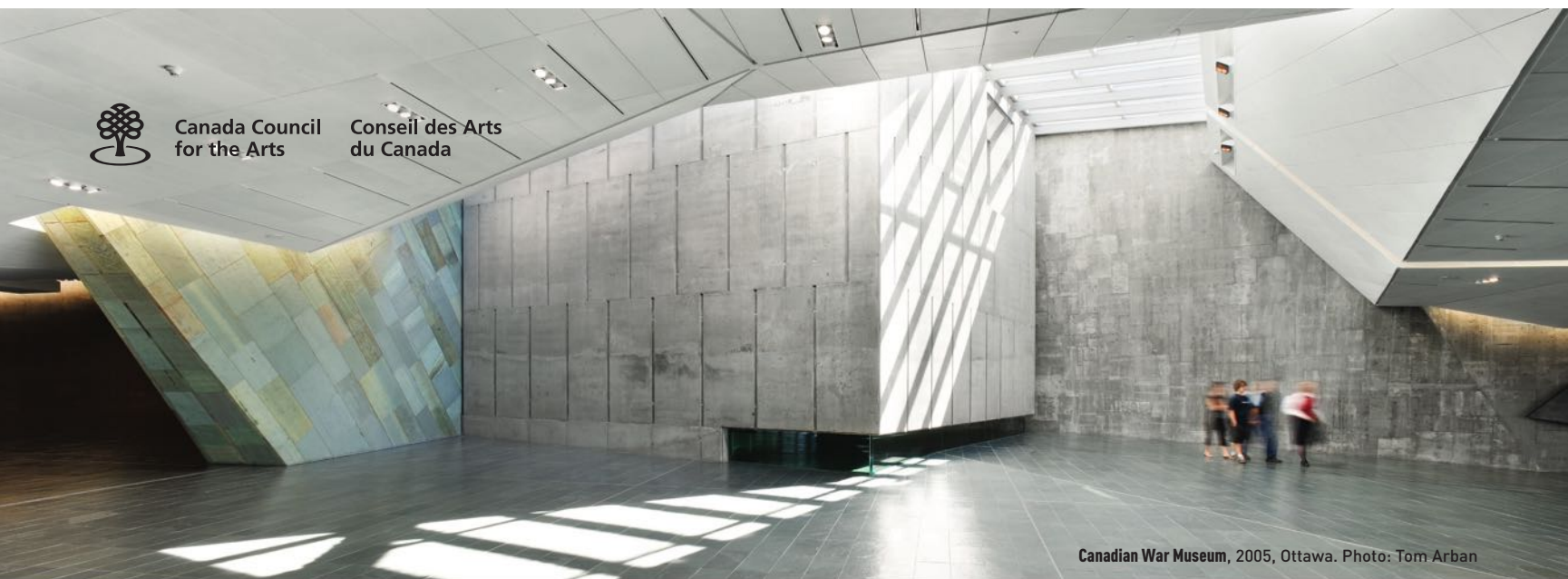
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CIRCLE REPLY CARD 19



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Canadian War Museum, 2005, Ottawa. Photo: Tom Arban



Martin Lipman

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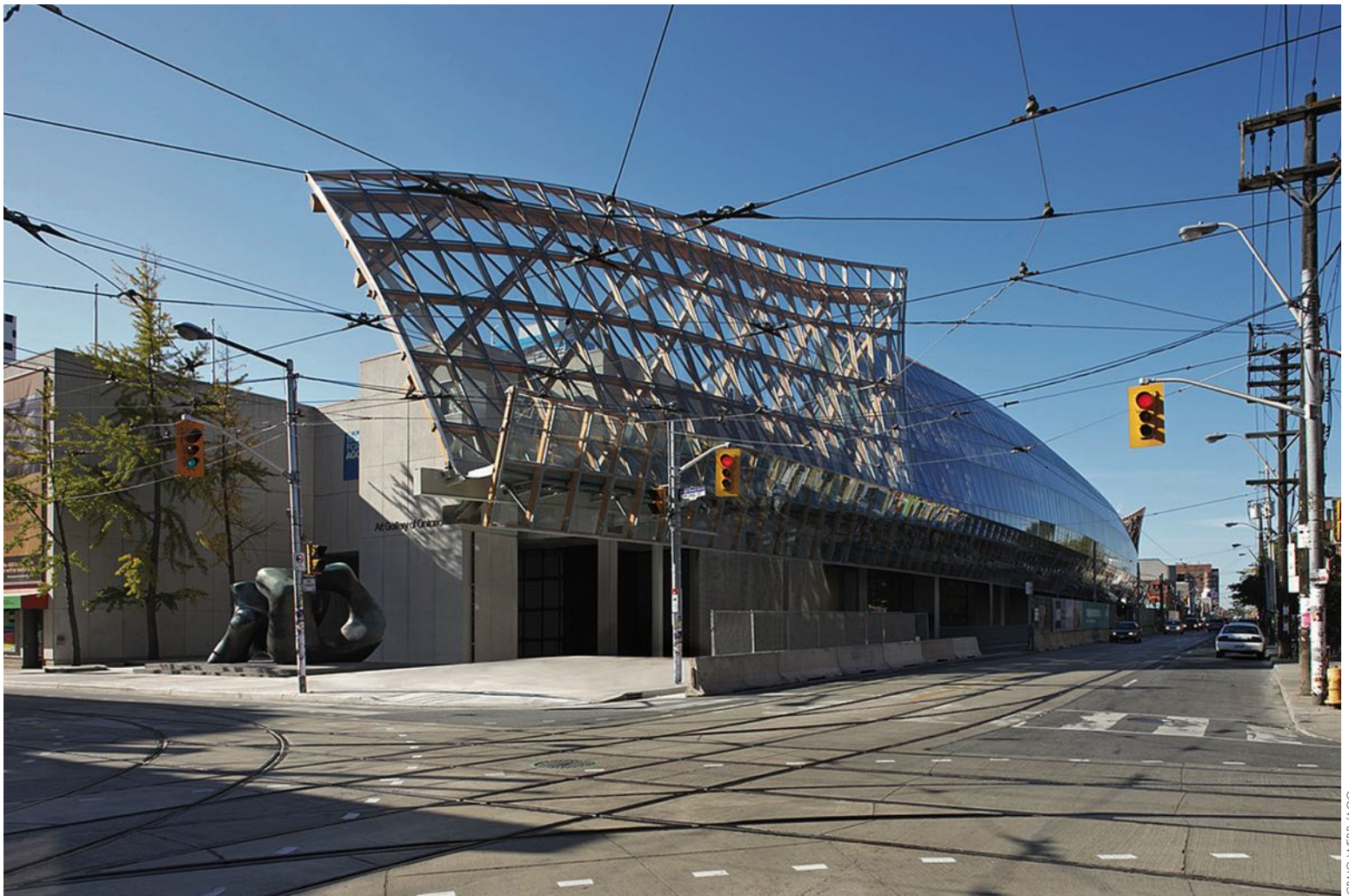
Find out more about Raymond Moriyama and the eight other winners of these prestigious awards, created by the Governor General of Canada and the Canada Council for the Arts: www.canadacouncil.ca

CIRCLE REPLY CARD 26



TRANSFORMERS

FRANK GEHRY LEADS A HIGHLY SKILLED TEAM IN THE RECENT TRANSFORMATION OF THE ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO, RESULTING IN A WHOLLY ACCESSIBLE AND CONTEMPORARY MAKEOVER OF THIS ALMOST CENTURY-OLD INSTITUTION.



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TEXT JOHN MCMINN

Last November, the Art Gallery of Ontario reopened after a major expansion and renovation to its facilities. For three days, crowds lined up around the block to visit the newly transformed gallery. Designed by Los Angeles-based architect Frank Gehry, the revamped AGO represents the final showpiece of Toronto's cultural renaissance. Not since the heady days of the 1960s and early '70s has Toronto seen such a concentration of major civic buildings and influx of inter-

OPPOSITE THE SPIRAL DOUGLAS FIR-CLAD STAIR OF WALKER COURT PROVIDES AN EXPRESSION OF FLUIDITY WITHIN THE NEWLY TOP-LIT INTERIOR COURTYARD. **ABOVE** THE HENRY MOORE SCULPTURE STILL ANCHORS THE CORNER OF THE AGO SITE, AND THE EXPRESSIVELY GLAZED SHEATHING OF THE REVAMPED INSTITUTION EXTENDS A FULL CITY BLOCK ALONG THE DUNDAS STREET FAÇADE.

national architects. This previous generation of projects includes, amongst others, Viljo Revell's Toronto City Hall (1965), Mies van der Rohe's Toronto-Dominion Centre (1968) and Commerce Court (1972), designed by I.M. Pei.

Where previous building booms upgraded centres of governance and commerce, thereby transforming the city core into a coherent orthodoxy of International Style Modernism, the wave of new projects transforming Toronto's

cultural institutions is an eclectic, stylistically varied sampling of Late Modernist Mannerism. These include Daniel Libeskind's Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) and Will Alsop's Ontario College of Art and Design, along with the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts by Diamond + Schmitt Architects Inc., and the Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art by Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg Architects. While the reviews of these projects have been mixed, particularly



the ROM which has received significant criticism for being self-indulgent, alienating and already dated by the time it opened, the response to Frank Gehry's flamboyant, playful yet measured transformation of the AGO has been overwhelmingly positive. Built on a budget of \$276 million, the project is more modest than many of the architect's earlier signature pieces, such as the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, Berlin's Deutsche Bank and the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, all of which were visited by gallery staff during the planning of the project.

At one point, officials briefly discussed moving the gallery altogether, one possible site being Toronto's waterfront. But these options were quickly put to rest in favour of maintaining the AGO's current location, which has not changed since its inception as the Art Gallery of Toronto in 1918. Given the complexity of working with the existing building and site—bounded by residential neighbourhoods on three sides and the early 19th-century Grange Park to its south—CEO Matthew Teitelbaum revealed that a decision was made early on in the planning process to commission an architect rather than opt for an architectural competition, in order to avoid a potentially unwieldy outcome. Frank Gehry was chosen after the client committee visited several of his buildings. According to Teitelbaum, the committee was impressed with the architect's ability to sculpt spaces with light while orchestrating transitions between building components with great finesse.

The Gehry design skillfully combines new and existing construction, presenting the visitor with an experience of openness and light, accented by the inviting pop-friendliness of the slightly cartoony overscaled Douglas Fir-clad ramps and stairs which bend and curve inside the building. Strongly connected to its surrounding neighbourhood community, one of the most striking experiences for the visitor is the way the architects have incorporated the city itself as an artifact for consideration. On the second floor above the north entrance of the building, the soaring Galleria Italia, funded by a group of donors from Toronto's Italian community, provides an intimate overview of the domestic 19th-century architecture of the neighbourhood.

Contrasting this is the view from the glazed winding stair running between the fourth and fifth floors of a new tower on the south side of the building, offering a sweeping view of Grange

TOP LEFT FRAMED BY HEAVILY EXPRESSED DOUGLAS FIR STRUCTURAL MEMBERS, THE NORTH-FACING GALLERIA ITALIA PROVIDES A PRIVILEGED VIEW OF THE CITY. **LEFT** THE BLUE-TINTED TITANIUM PANELS CLADDING THE REAR FAÇADE ARE AN ODD CHOICE FOR THE BUILDING'S SOUTH ELEVATION.

Park below, the neighbouring Ontario College of Art and Design, and the financial core of the city beyond. The AGO is representative of the insightful and populist nature of Frank Gehry's work. The building also showcases the neighbourhood in which he grew up until his early teens, before his family relocated to the United States.

The straightforward gallery spaces are enhanced by natural light, but the detailing often conveys a certain bulkiness or heaviness: chunky louvres, heavy window frames, and occasionally awkward circulation paths—like the circuitous route to reach the south tower elevators. Yet the overall experience of the new gallery is very positive, bringing the experience of art to a broad-based public audience without diminishing its cultural significance.

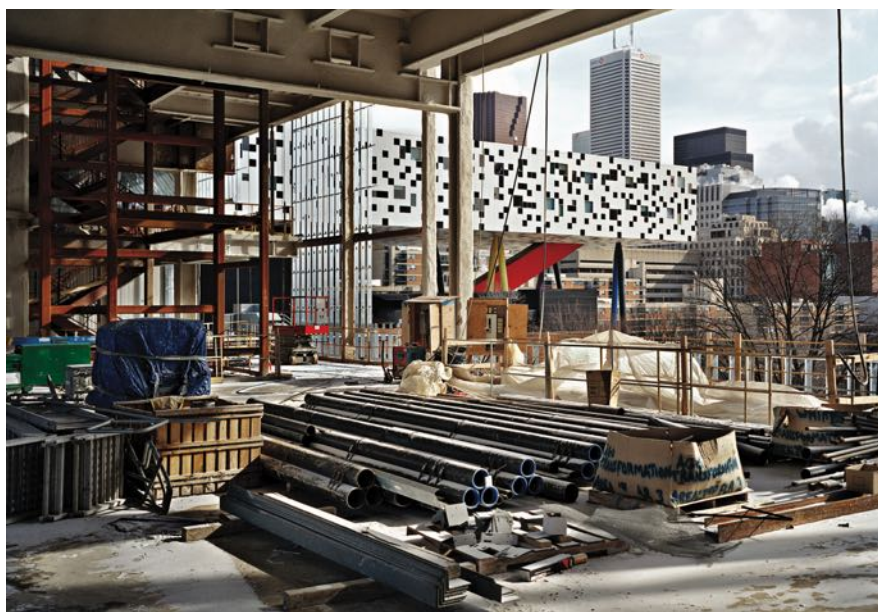
A visit to the AGO starts with a stroll toward the entrance, along a generous colonnade parallel to Dundas Street and beneath a sweeping 200-metre-long glazed sculpture atrium—which provides a striking and coherent new identity to the various accretions to the original building. Once inside, the entrance space feels a little cramped—perhaps as a result of existing site conditions—between the entry doors and a sensuous curving ramp that leads visitors up and on axis with Walker Court. An original grand space of the 1918 gallery, Walker Court has been entirely reworked with copious amounts of glazing covering the roof, allowing light to flood into this interior courtyard. Lending warmth and tactility to an otherwise abstract, neutral gallery environment, a twisting Douglas Fir-clad stair spirals down from the new fourth- and fifth-floor contemporary art spaces, terminating on the second level and hovering just above visitors looking upwards in the middle of Walker Court.

The axial relationship of the entrance to Walker Court and the historic Grange House beyond—a historic home incorporated into the original gallery—is the primary architectural move in the AGO and a significant improvement to the last major gallery intervention in 1993, led by architect Barton Myers. As Gehry states, the visitor is brought in contact with the artwork within seconds upon arrival, then led through the arched, marble-clad sanctuary of Walker Court, which is deliberately kept free of art—a bright, quiet place of refuge away from the intensity of

TOP RIGHT THE FACETED PORTION OF THE NORTH FAÇADE CONSTANTLY CHANGES ACCORDING TO WEATHER AND LIGHT CONDITIONS. IN THIS IMAGE, THE GLAZING REFLECTS THE DOMESTICALLY SCALED ARCHITECTURE ACROSS THE STREET. **RIGHT** A VIEW OF THE FIFTH LEVEL OF THE NEW GALLERY SPACE DURING CONSTRUCTION, LOOKING SOUTH-EAST TOWARD THE SPECKLED ONTARIO COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN AND THE FINANCIAL CORE BEYOND.



SEAN WEAVER / AGO



EDWARD BURTYNSKY / AGO



LEFT A LARGE SKYLIGHT IS BEING PREPARED TO ILLUMINATE THE BETTY GOODWIN GALLERY. VARIOUS STUDIES WERE CONDUCTED TO ENSURE THAT NO DIRECT SUNLIGHT ADVERSELY AFFECTS THE WORKS ON DISPLAY, AND TO ELIMINATE ANY DISTRACTING GLARE FOR VISITORS. **BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT** WALKER COURT UNDERGOES ITS TRANSFORMATION; THE COMPLETED BETTY GOODWIN GALLERY.

Rationalizing the floor plan and circulation was best achieved on the second floor of the gallery, where two major parallel organizing elements—the Galleria Italia and a concourse adjacent to Walker Court—frame a suite of elegantly top-lit spaces housing the Thompson Collection of Canadian Art. Here, one finds a well-organized and stunning collection of canonical works, including paintings by Jean-Paul Riopelle, Paul-Émile Borduas, Lawren Harris and David Milne in spaces that flow seamlessly from one to the next. Adjacent to the Canadian art collection is a marvellous array of African art donated by Toronto entrepreneur Murray Frum, housed in a space set apart from the rest of the floor. Designed by Shim-Sutcliffe Architects, the mood of this gallery shifts to a sombre sense of enclosure, with finely crafted artworks complemented by highly refined dark-toned metal casework.

In addition to reorganizing and opening up the existing building, a new five-storey tower was added to the rear of the complex. Containing the AGO's collection of contemporary art on its fourth and fifth levels, the south side of both these floors boasts large orientation areas dominated by extensive glazing and overscaled wooden louvres, which protect the works from direct sunlight while providing visitors with spectacular views of the city. The curatorial presentation of the pieces by key Canadian figures such as Brian Jungen, Betty Goodwin, Greg Curnoe and Michael Snow, exhibits the works as they were produced chronologically and in context with the social, political and economic circumstances that influenced the cultural discourse of the day.

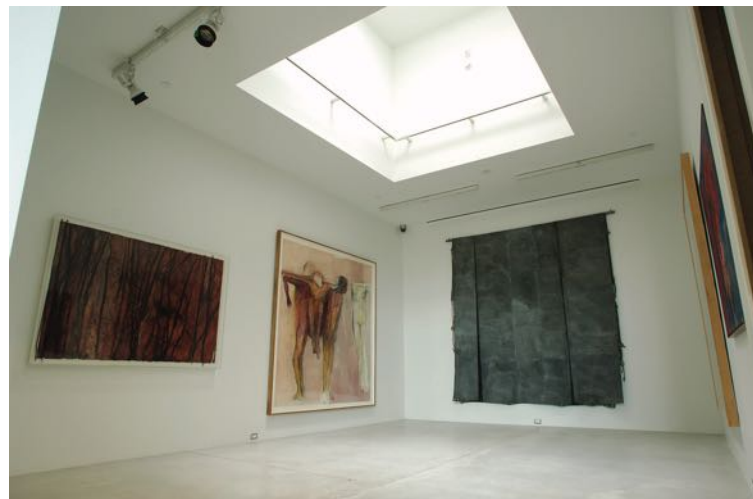
Despite the modest scope of the project—in comparison with Gehry's other major works around the world—and with the complexities of working with an existing building, the design team has achieved great success, deftly inserting elements for maximum impact while strongly recasting the character of the institution. The internal spatial reorganization, along with the glazed "windshield" running the entire length of the front Dundas Street façade, creates a truly memorable and unique gallery experience, and demonstrates Gehry's great skill in the transformative process of the AGO. **CA**

John McMinn is an Associate Professor at the University of Waterloo School of Architecture.

the surrounding art-filled rooms.

The impetus for the renovation was a gift of \$70 million by the late Kenneth Thompson, a prominent Toronto businessman with an extensive collection of Canadian and European art. The renovation and expansion is the seventh since the museum opened, adding 47 percent of new gallery space to house the expanded collection and to allow more of the AGO's permanent collection to be seen on a regular basis.

Successive renovations resulted in a varied and often discordant array of rooms of differing architectural styles. As a result, the Gehry-led team sought to bring a sense of coherence to the experience of the building.

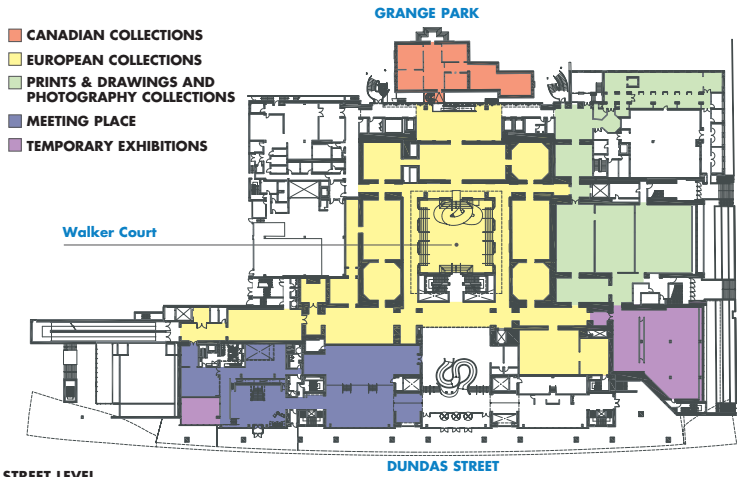




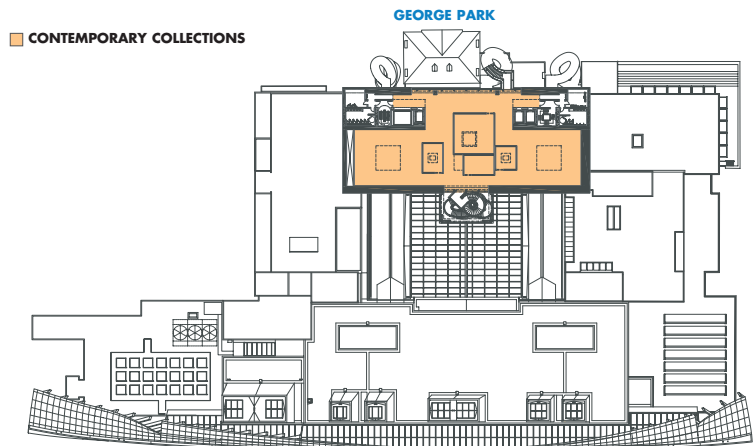
ABOVE MANY HERITAGE AND STRUCTURAL CONSIDERATIONS WERE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WHEN ADDING ONTO THE NEW ART GALLERY.

CLIENT ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO
ARCHITECT TEAM GEHRY INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTS INC. (ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN); ADAMSON ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS (ON-SITE ARCHITECTS)
STRUCTURAL HALCROW YOLLES ENGINEERING
MECHANICAL H.H. ANGUS & ASSOCIATES LIMITED
ELECTRICAL MULVEY & BANANI INTERNATIONAL
CIVIL RY ANDERSON ASSOCIATES LIMITED
EXHIBIT DESIGN—AFRICAN GALLERY SHIM-SUTCLIFFE ARCHITECTS
EXHIBIT DESIGN—OFF THE WALL REICH + PETCH DESIGN INTERNATIONAL
INTERIORS BREGMAN + HAMANN ARCHITECTS (OFFICE AND FURNITURE)
GEOTECHNICAL TROW ASSOCIATES INC.

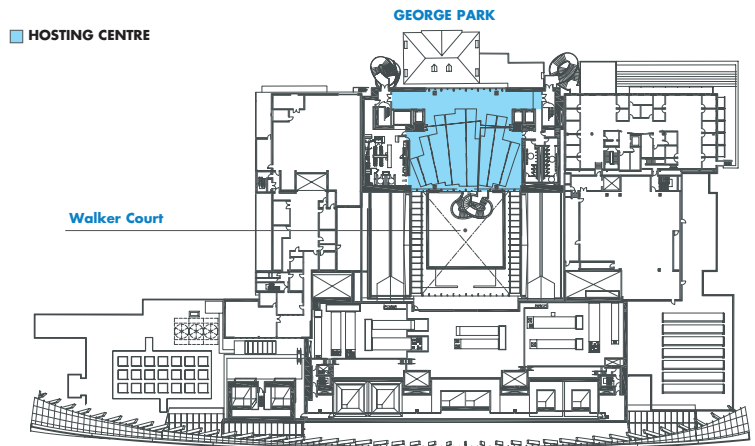
LANDSCAPE ENVISION—THE HOUGH GROUP, THE PLANNING PARTNERSHIP
CODE COMPLIANCE/LIFE SAFETY LEBER/RUBES INC.
SIGNAGE/GRAPHICS BRUCE MAU DESIGN INC.
LIGHTING L'OBSERVATOIRE INTERNATIONAL
COST CONSULTANTS HANSCOMB LIMITED
URBAN PLANNING/CITY APPROVALS URBAN STRATEGIES INC.
HISTORIC/HERITAGE ARCHITECTS E.R.A. ARCHITECTS INC.
CONSTRUCTION MANAGER ELIUSDON CORPORATION
AREA 190,000 FT² (RENOVATIONS); 97,000 FT² (ADDITIONS)
BUDGET \$276 M
COMPLETION NOVEMBER 2008



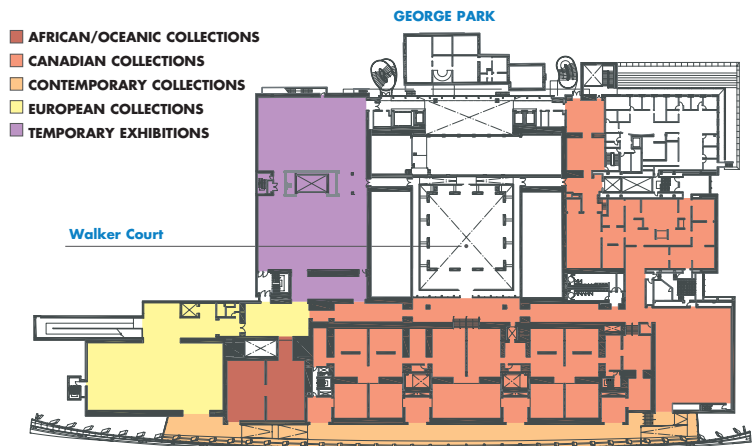
STREET LEVEL



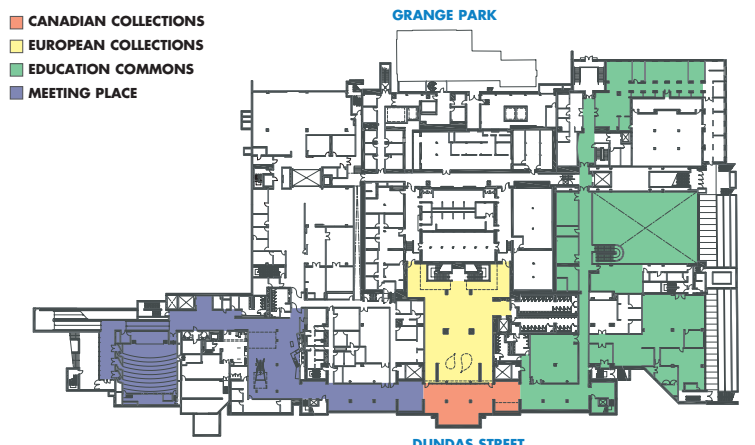
FIFTH FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



CONCOURSE LEVEL



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TWO-FACED



THE RENOVATION OF A HERITAGE HOUSE IN A QUAIN VICTORIAN NEIGHBOURHOOD INTRODUCES WHOLLY CONTEMPORARY DESIGN IDEALS IN A RESPECTFUL MANNER.

PROJECT CABBAGETOWN HOUSE, TORONTO, ONTARIO

ARCHITECT DUBBELDAM DESIGN ARCHITECTS

TEXT DAVID STEINER

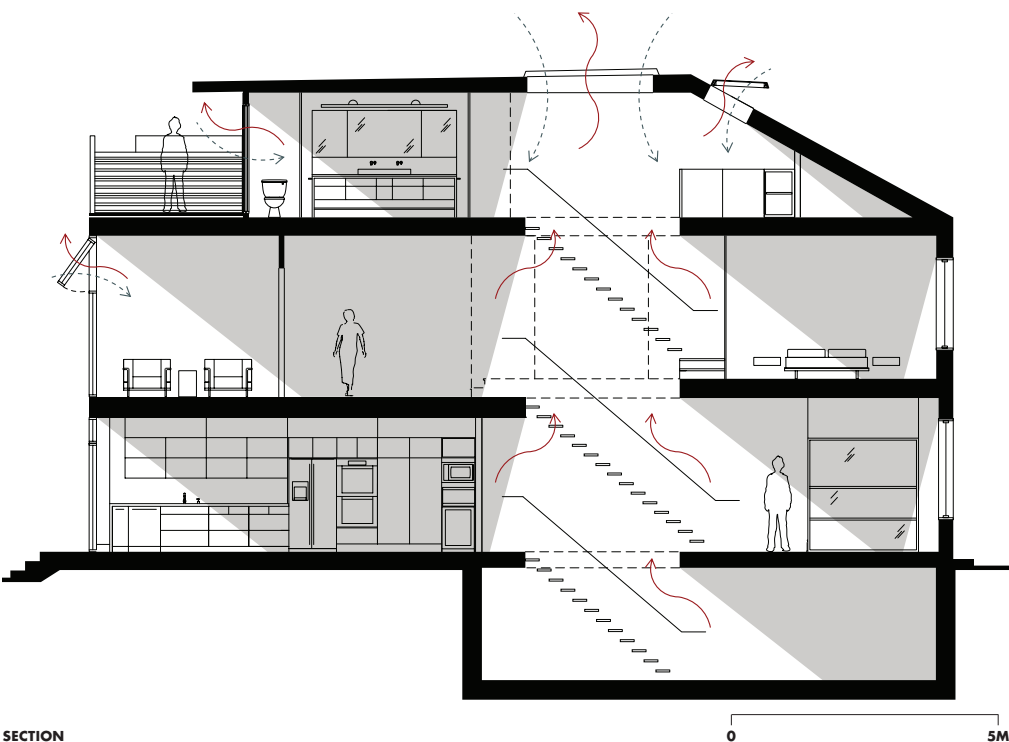
PHOTOS SHAI GIL

Dubbeldam Design Architects (DDA) is a small Toronto firm of five, distinguished by a steadily growing portfolio of crisp, straightforward houses. Four years ago, a professional couple asked DDA to renovate their semi-detached heritage house in Cabbagetown. It is an area of Toronto that long ago left its humble, working-class roots for an overpriced future. Carefully restored Victorian brick homes line Amelia Street, a narrow road that is shaded by giant hardwood trees. In neighbourhoods like this, staunch preservationists often take root, objecting to anything

ABOVE A WELCOMING PORTAL IN THE LANEWAY DEMARCATES ENTRY TO THE SUNNY REAR PATIO OF THE CABBAGETOWN HOUSE.

that deviates from accepted nostalgia.

"If it's worth preserving," said principal Heather Dubbeldam, "then there's no reason not to." Seen from the street, the century-old house has changed little. The masonry veneer on the house's face was restored, all but obscuring the unequivocally contemporary design apparent from the back elevation. Neighbours got what



SECTION

ABOVE VIEWS OF THE FRONT AND BACK ELEVATIONS REVEAL THE STARTLING CONTRAST BETWEEN THE STREET-FACING OBEYIENT RED BRICK VICTORIAN, AND THE THOROUGHLY MODERN EXPANSIVELY GLAZED REAR FAÇADE.

they wanted—a uniform streetscape of well maintained, noble old houses—while from the laneway nothing remained the same. What was preserved, beyond the façade, was nominal: a fireplace, the first-floor staircase, mouldings and floors of the front room, and the original two-by-four exterior stud wall, thereby retaining the original footprint of the house. After the insides were carted away, the structure was plumbed, shored up where needed, and furred out to obtain the required depth for insulation. A contemporary house, filled with southern light and views to the laneway behind, has been inserted into the existing shell.

Only 5.5 metres at its widest (stepping back to 3.2 metres), the house was once a collection of small rooms. It has been reinvented as a home of

connected spaces that flow together both in plan and section. Subtle changes in floor elevation, materials and views suggest the house's past configuration. Period details in the front room have been preserved—though muted with a cool colour palette—and make a smart contrast to the contemporary design beyond. Jatoba, an exotic hardwood used for flooring, creates a visual connection between the second and third levels. Sunlight filters in through a skylight above the stairs and through the full-height, south-facing aluminum windows on each floor.

Ambitions for a sustainable home resulted in simple solutions for passive heating and cooling: open risers on the second floor allow warm air to circulate upward and out of the operable skylight; a ductless air conditioner, set into the millwork of the master bedroom on the third floor, lets the cool air sink through the house. The roof structure is built to support the weight of a future green roof. "We incorporate sustainable systems as a matter of course," said Dubbeldam, pointing out that the operable window on the short south wall in the middle of the house is key to creating a cross breeze.

The architects took evident pleasure in making the most out of small spaces using clever details and economical materials. Between the north end of the master bedroom and a freestanding wall clad in wood flooring is a walk-through closet. Off-the-shelf, chest-height cabinet doors have been made to look custom by joining two shorter ones together at a horizontal seam, which were then lacquered and given discreet vertical handles. A narrow laundry chute, made from ductwork and recessed into the wall, channels soiled clothing to the basement. While lying in bed, one can look past a single-sided fireplace, through the ensuite bathroom and into the tops of the lane-way trees.

As the only bit of new construction, this bathroom is a direct extension of the master suite making the two rooms a breezy, brilliant puzzle of space for bathing and sleeping. A heated limestone tile wall runs down the middle, dividing the wet and dry spaces. Both the toilet and stand-up shower are placed beside the full-height, partially frosted sliding glass doors—a decadent and delightful luxury. Through the sliding doors is a private deck, flush with the bathroom floor and just big enough for two lounge seats.

This 100-year-old house pushes the expectations of a family dwelling in a dense neighbourhood. The interior brightness and the fully glazed south wall do not detract from the privacy one

RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM THE KITCHEN IS THE EPI-TOME OF CLEAN-LINED EFFICIENCY; THE SKILLFUL INTERPLAY OF GORGEOUSLY SLEEK MATERIALS MAKE THE BATHROOMS A WHOLLY SYBARITIC EXPERIENCE.

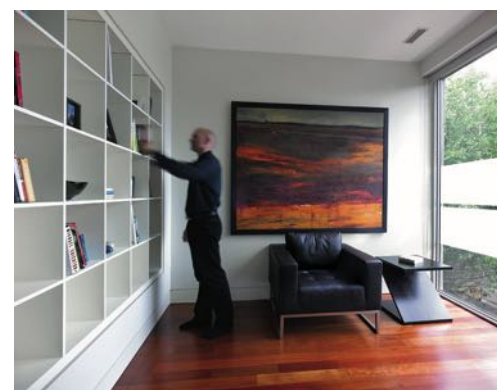
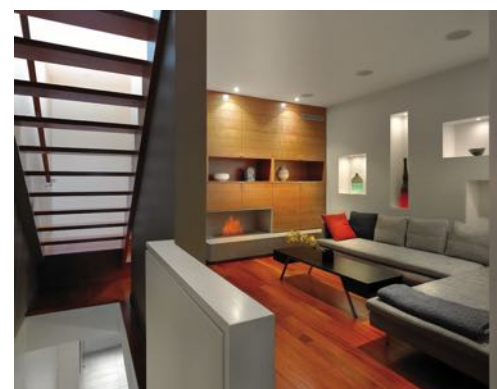




feels inside. High ceilings, carefully placed lighting and clever storage, recessed here and there between wall studs, gives the impression of a space far bigger than the house's 220 square metres. Dubbeldam's ambition is for her firm to design larger institutional projects while continuing to work on contemporary houses. The promise of future buildings designed with clear ideas and executed with boldness and wit are evident throughout a house so unassuming from the sidewalk. **CA**

David Steiner is a freelance writer living in Ontario.

ARCHITECT TEAM HEATHER DUBBELDAM, TANIA URSOMARZO, KATYA MARSHALL, HEATHER ROSS, KATRINA TOUV
CLIENT ROBERT BRISTOW AND NICK FOGLIA
STRUCTURAL K.H. DAVIS CONSULTING LTD.
INTERIORS DUBBELDAM DESIGN ARCHITECTS
CONTRACTOR TROKE CONTRACTING
AREA 2,300 FT²
BUDGET \$320,000
COMPLETION 2008



LEFT A FULLY GLAZED SLIDING WINDOW WALL IN THE KITCHEN EXTENDS THE ROOM BY BLURRING INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR SPACE. **TOP** THE QUIET RETREAT OF THE SITTING ROOM. **ABOVE** BANDS OF FROSTED GLASS NEGATE THE NEED FOR WINDOW COVERINGS IN THE LIBRARY, MAKING THE MOST OF ITS SOUTHERN EXPOSURE.



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FAR AND AWAY

WEST COAST MODERNIST PRINCIPLES ARE RESURRECTED IN THIS MODESTLY ELEGANT ISLAND HOME.

PROJECT MAYNE ISLAND HOUSE, GULF ISLANDS, BRITISH COLUMBIA

ARCHITECT MATTHEW WOODRUFF

TEXT ADELE WEDER

PHOTOS MATTHEW WOODRUFF



The project statement, as written by the architect, sounds almost defiant: “This is a project with a normal program, a normal budget, and a normal site for a normal family.” Malleable as the concept may be, the emphasis on “normalcy” is not accidental. While this weekend house off the British Columbia coast has been variously categorized as “low-cost,” “sustainable” or “site-specific,” architect Matthew Woodruff himself is the first to dismiss any *prima facie* categorization. Environmentalism and economy are the natural result of a design that embraces logic and simplicity.

After an eight-year tenure at Bing Thom Architects (BTA), Woodruff and BTA colleague Clinton

Cuddington left the firm to establish Measured Architecture, at which time they designed and built the house on Mayne Island, about a two-hour ferry ride from the Vancouver area. Woodruff has recently left Measured to head up a solo practice, but declines to elaborate on his departure beyond his wish to pursue a “different direction.” It’s easy to sense what the difference might involve when one compares Woodruff’s Mayne Island House next to Cuddington’s Shaughnessy House (see page 32)—a highly refined and luxuriously clad Modernist mansion designed to be his erstwhile partner’s main residence. Woodruff’s much smaller and more rustic weekend home on Mayne Island embodies a mere two

bedrooms and 1,100 square feet.

The Mayne Island house resurrects the original West Coast Modernist principles, which are nominally applied to huge, high-budget homes in the Vancouver area but in reality, are now half-forgotten. These principles include taking advantage of local climate and geography resulting in poetically framed views of the surroundings; naturally lit interiors; and a compact, open plan that was just large enough for the needs of the occupants. That was 50 years ago and long before our collective obsession with the now largely meaningless term “green” architecture.

These original “West Coast” principles usually translated into extensively glazed front façades that brought in panoramic ocean views. In post-millennium southern British Columbia, however, ocean-view lots for less than a million bucks are virtually extinct. These days, the viable alternative for adventurous architects is the richly foli-

OPPOSITE THE HANDSOME SIDE PROFILE OF THE CEDAR-CLAD RESIDENCE IS DEFINED BY A GENEROUS CLERESTORY AND ROOF OVERHANG. **BELOW** LARGE GLASS DOORS SLIDE OPEN TO REINFORCE THE SHED-LIKE AESTHETIC WHILE ENABLING CROSS-BREEZES AND MAXIMUM VIEWS IN THIS ISLAND RETREAT.



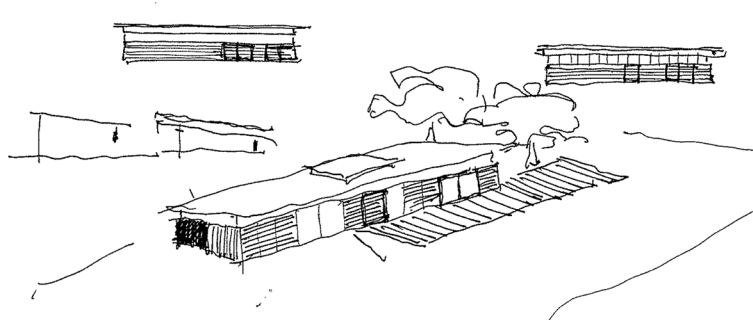
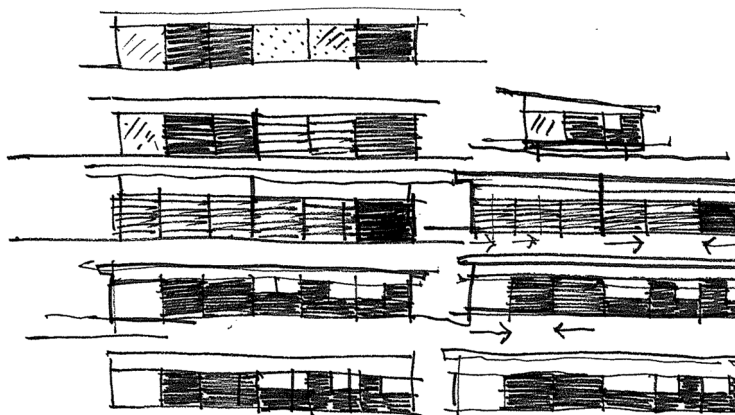


aged lots of the nearby Gulf Islands—just the sort of site on which Woodruff and many of his peers are now building. Instead of the proverbial vista of water, the sight lines of the Mayne Island house are geared solely to the sky and vegetation where a panoply of coniferous treetops runs along the base of the front clerestory window; an artfully straggly pair of apple trees stands in as a sculpture garden visible through the rear double-leaf door. In summer, the shadows generated outside and inside animate the main space, in line with Woodruff's consideration of architecture as a "receiver of ephemeral experience," as he terms it.

The Mayne Island house is defined by simple, strong gestures: heavy timber framing, knife-plate connections, dark cedar cladding outside, white drywall inside, identical factory-issue doors. In fact, there are no conventional windows. The plan itself is largely predicated on climate control: its fenestration pattern allows cooling cross-breezes in high summer, warmth on its south-end living/dining/kitchen area, and natural daylighting, through the glazed doors and clerestory, from dawn to dusk. Despite the Gulf Islands' searingly hot summers, there is no air-conditioning unit in the house, and the only heating system is a small wood stove. "We have become so machine-obsessed, and it's totally unnecessary," asserts Woodruff. On the day of my site visit—a bracingly cold March day—the streaming sun gently warmed and illuminated the entire living/dining area. Aided by the heat-absorbing qualities of the cedar cladding's black stain, this is natural, off-the-grid climate control. To bring daylighting all the way into the central core, though, the interior walls are also glazed at the top, so no walls extend all the way to the ceiling. This presented its own structural challenges, as the interior-spanning beams had to be extensively reinforced with metal plates in deference to the house's location in an earthquake zone. The spanning beams meet roughly and imperfectly, so as to not always align or sit flush with intersecting elements. The walls meet the floor with ordinary baseboards instead of reveals. This roughness of detailing is a result of pragmatics, allows Woodruff. But the gestural nature of its articulation brings the Mayne Island house truer to the original ideals of West Coast Modernism. Woodruff argues for a deferential architecture based on a practical understanding and execution of technique. In the waning days of an era ruled by intellectual and aesthetic fashion, how apropos that we return to time-honoured solutions. **CA**

Adele Weder is an architectural critic and curator based in British Columbia.

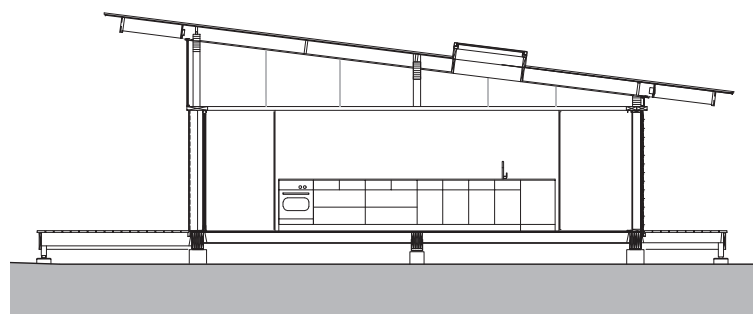
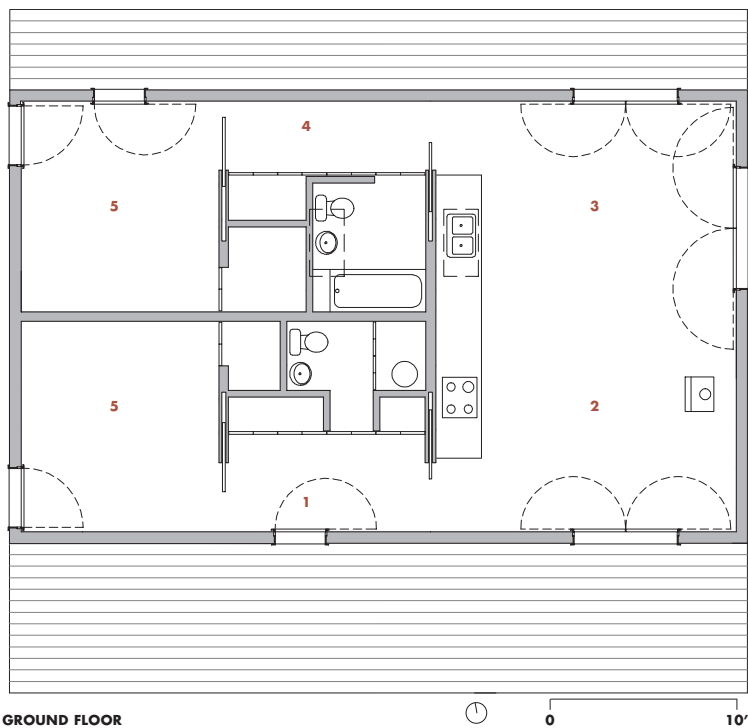
LEFT, TOP TO BOTTOM DURING THE DAY, THE DARK CEDAR CLADDING AND REFLECTIVE QUALITIES OF THE CLERESTORY GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE HOUSE IS DISSOLVING INTO THE LANDSCAPE; THE HOUSE RESTS LIGHTLY ON THE LANDSCAPE, AN EFFECT THAT IS HEIGHTENED BY THE APPARENT THINNESS OF ITS CANTED ROOF; DESPITE THE MODEST AND SPARE PROPORTIONS OF THE HOME, THE INTERIOR APPEARS SPACIOUS AND COMFORTABLE.



ABOVE WOODRUFF'S SKETCHES ILLUSTRATE HIS DESIRE FOR A FLEXIBLE AND LIGHT ENCLOSURE, AND A HOUSE THAT RESTS DELICATELY ON ITS SITE.

BELOW A CLOSE-UP VIEW OF THE CLERESTORY ILLUSTRATES THE KNIFE-PLATE STEEL CONNECTORS AND THE SIMPLE POST-AND-BEAM CONSTRUCTION.

CLIENT MATTHEW WOODRUFF/CLAUDIA SCHULENBURG
ARCHITECT TEAM MATTHEW WOODRUFF, CLAUDIA SCHULENBURG
STRUCTURAL JONES KWONG KISHI CONSULTING ENGINEERS
CONTRACTOR OWNER-BUILT
AREA 1,100 FT²
BUDGET \$200,000
COMPLETION SUMMER 2007



SECTION

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WOLFE AT THE DOOR



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NEIGHBOURHOOD CHALLENGES ESTABLISHED
DESIGN PANEL GUIDELINES.**

PROJECT WOLFE AVENUE RESIDENCE
ARCHITECT MEASURED. ARCHITECTURE. INC.
TEXT LESLIE JEN
PHOTOS MARTIN TESSLER

It is every architect's dream to build his own house, an endeavour usually fraught with the earnest gravitas of ideological convictions acquired during the course of an intensive architectural education and the years of practice that follow. This most personal building project is the ultimate reward for unwavering dedication to a sometimes thankless profession.

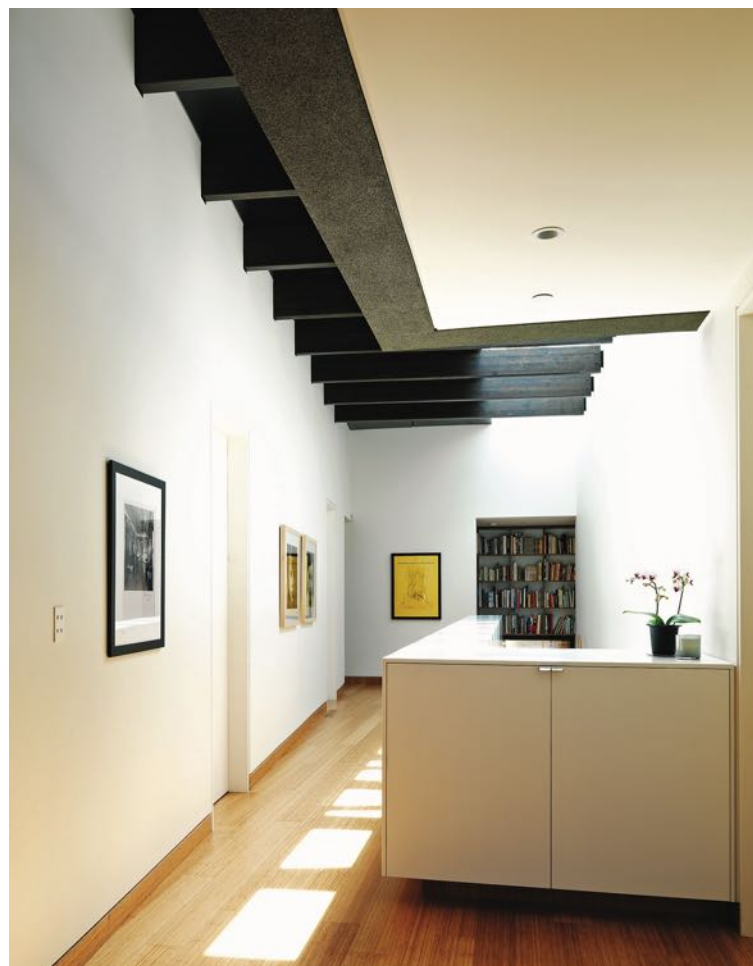
For Clinton Cuddington, principal of Measured. Architecture Inc., this is certainly the case. In his words, the design of his family home represented an "exorcism" of sorts, a freedom from the dictates of others. In the role of both client and designer, he could finally design exactly what he wanted, how he wanted, completely unfettered. Yet he is unequivocal about the great respect he holds for the mentors who have played an important part in his life trajectory thus far: from celebrated Prairie Modern architect Clifford Wiens—the father of a childhood friend who inspired Cuddington to pursue architecture as a career, to his former long-term employer Bing Thom, he acknowledges their influence and the valuable lessons he has learned from them.

This project is extraordinary for a number of reasons. Budget constraints that many architects must contend with were virtually absent here. Family circumstances enabled him to dream—and design—big. Backed by his father-in-law, this single-family home on Wolfe Avenue in Vancouver's tony Shaughnessy neighbourhood was originally intended as a development project. But Cuddington and his wife Monica Berdin, who is trained as an interior designer, nonetheless conceived of the house with themselves and their two young children as the clients, in order to achieve in this project a sincere manifestation of their Modernist design ideals.

Though not unanticipated, the process of designing and building this house was burdened with an arduous approvals process, given the general conservatism of the neighbourhood community. Cuddington initially encountered a great deal of resistance from the First Shaughnessy Advisory Design Panel (FSADP), but buoyed by a sense of optimism and perhaps even naïveté, persevered, exercising due diligence in thoroughly mapping and researching the history of the neighbourhood in order to distill its essential character—which he hoped to interpret in a contemporary format. In his tenacity, Cuddington solicited support from neighbours and even went so far as to enlist the aid of the venerable Abraham Rogatnick, professor emeritus of architecture at the University of British Columbia and author, years ago, of the original First Shaughnessy Design Guidelines. Rogatnick wrote a letter of support, eloquently enumerating the ways in which the young architect's contemporary design contributes to the positive and harmonious evolution of this century-old historic neighbourhood characterized by traditional Tudor details such as gabled roofs and deep eaves. Thus armed with a stack of meticulously prepared documents, Cuddington eventually won over the FSADP and the City of Vancouver, and successfully advanced to the development permit stage.

Replacing an unremarkable postwar house on the site, the new house acknowledges its predecessor by retaining the existing four-foot-high stone retaining wall that runs along Wolfe Avenue, an easily recognizable element that gives coherence to the neighbourhood. Cuddington takes this one step further via the split-face granite wall that runs through the house, forming the primary ordering device or spine which separates the house into two ever-so-slightly splayed volumes. The wall penetrates the house from the front entry sequence right through to the back garden, its rough tactility offering a pleasing contrast to the smooth and refined interior surfaces.

The process of building held some unexpected surprises. A master stonemason originally from Osaka was hired for his formidable skills in



OPPOSITE A VIEW FROM THE DRIVEWAY OF THE WOLFE HOUSE REVEALS A STRIKING COMPOSITION OF FORMS AND CONTRASTING MATERIALS. **TOP RIGHT** THE SECOND FLOOR IS AWASH IN NATURAL DAYLIGHT FROM THE SKYLIGHT RUNNING THE LENGTH OF THE HOUSE. **RIGHT** LIMESTONE SHEATHES THE FLOOR OF THE KITCHEN AND DINING AREA.



ABOVE MATURE LANDSCAPING AND A SIZEABLE OUTDOOR PATIO ON THE GENTLY SLOPING SITE CONTRIBUTE TO THIS IDYLIC PRIVATE GREEN SANCTUARY AT THE REAR OF THE HOUSE. **LEFT** PRISTINE MILLWORK PROVIDES PLENTY OF STORAGE IN THE LINEAR KITCHEN. **OPPOSITE** A VIEW FROM THE MAIN-FLOOR ENTRY FOYER UP THE SKYLIT STAIR TOWARDS THE LIBRARY.



order to establish the cadence, rhythm and positioning of the split granite. Remarkably, their single-minded focus and dedication set the emotional pitch for the project, causing the other trades to step up their collective game, the result of which is an impeccably crafted house.

A fairly significant slope runs up from the front of the house to the back, and as Wolfe Avenue is a relatively busy thoroughfare, the rear of the house becomes a verdant garden of refuge which enjoys a good amount of sun and all the privacy and peaceful serenity that the front does not. Landscape rooms in the form of patios, terraces and balconies create intermediary zones between interior and exterior space. The involvement of landscape architect Elizabeth Watts helped ensure the preservation of not only the classic Shaughnessy streetscape but the original landscape principles of the neighbourhood as defined by the guidelines.

What is most apparent about the house is its sophisticated sculptural quality. The massing and material contrast create a striking composition of interlocking and overlapping planes and volumes, solids and voids. A credible tripartite order is established from the heavy stone base, the screened wood façade elements in the middle, and the strong horizontal cap provided by the 35-foot cantilevered roof, a thoroughly modern interpretation of the deep eaves characteristic of the neighbourhood. Thanks to subtly executed landscaping, an L-shaped driveway, and a door skillfully positioned perpendicular to the street frontage, the garage is discreetly and cleverly tucked under the main level of the house, virtually invisible from Wolfe Avenue.

Sustainable features were incorporated into the design as a matter of

laying split-face mortarless stone, and he and his team spent an astonishing eight months on site. The team operated in a highly traditional and ritualistic manner: wearing traditional split-toe Tabi shoes and wielding old-world hickory-handled tools, they would work diligently, splitting and laying stones, taking occasional breaks to meditate. Some important lessons in ideology and technique were learned: the Japanese masons compose the spaces between the stones rather than the stones themselves, and they were observed methodically tracing the seams in between with their hands in



course. A geothermal exchange system with a ground-source heat pump dramatically reduces energy requirements, and the presence of a green roof along with permeable site paving and native landscaping result in less than a 1% increase in stormwater runoff from the site. To reduce the amount of artificial lighting required, ample natural daylight is introduced through strategically placed openings like the central skylight running along the spine of the house. But no vast ill-defined expanses of glazing are present here: instead, subtle manipulations of view are achieved through a sequential ordering of experience through the spaces. From the main-floor dining room, the majestic mountain ridge to the north is just barely glimpsed, which is followed by an explosion of view through the floor-to-ceiling windows in the second-floor reading room. From this space, one can see all the way to Arthur Erickson's campus for Simon Fraser University in Burnaby.

It has been suggested that this project leans toward the facile: after all, it's a beautiful house in a beautiful neighbourhood in a beautiful city. But it is an admirable first effort for a young architect out on his own, and more importantly, represents a positive advancement in the evolution of the urban design panel process. This victory over the NIMBY confines of conservatism has an even more interesting twist: what initially could have erupted into a combative and adversarial relationship between architect and neighbourhood advisory panel has in fact been such a positive experience that Cuddington was invited to participate on the panel as a representative of the Architectural Institute of British Columbia. His tenure in this capacity has since expired, but he is deliberating over whether or not to accept an invitation to rejoin the panel as a member at large. **CA**

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LEVEL 2

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1 MASTER BEDROOM | 7 BATHROOM |
| 2 BEDROOM | 8 WALK-IN CLOSET |
| 3 GUEST ROOM | 9 HALLWAY |
| 4 LIBRARY | 10 LAUNDRY |
| 5 READING ROOM | 11 LIFT |
| 6 BALCONY | |



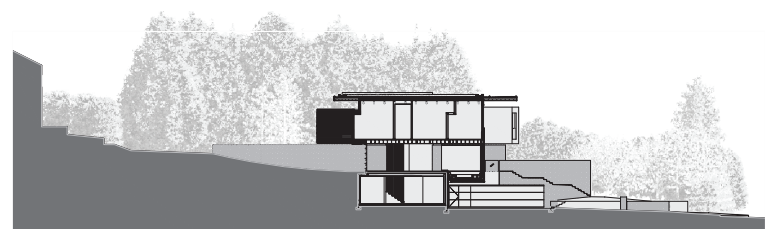
LEVEL 1

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1 KITCHEN | 6 NOOK |
| 2 DINING ROOM | 7 WASHROOM |
| 3 LIVING ROOM | 8 BOOT ROOM |
| 4 MEDIA PIT | 9 HALLWAY |
| 5 PATIO | 10 LIFT |



LEVEL 0

- | | |
|------------|-------------------|
| 1 REC ROOM | 5 MECHANICAL ROOM |
| 2 STUDIO | 6 ENTRY |
| 3 GARAGE | 7 HALLWAY |
| 4 STORAGE | 8 LIFT |



SECTION



MORE MORTAR, MUZUNGU!

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS EXPAND THEIR EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS THROUGH HANDS-ON BUILDING IN UGANDA.

TEXT KELLEY BEAVERFORD AND STEWART MORGAN

The defining challenge of the 21st century will be to face the reality that humanity shares a common fate on a crowded planet. That common fate will require new forms of global co-operation, a fundamental point of blinding simplicity that many world leaders have yet to understand or embrace.

—Jeffrey Sachs, *Common Wealth: Economics for a Crowded Planet*

The face of Canadian design education is undergoing a quiet tectonic shift. Growing demand for international skills and an underlying need to demonstrate social relevance on the world stage has led institutions like the University of Manitoba to diversify their coursework. Service Learning in the Global Community is an innovative model that has emerged in parallel to established

ABOVE A UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA ARCHITECTURE STUDENT SHARES A LAUGH WITH A LOCAL KATEBO YOUTH DURING A RECENT DESIGN-BUILD STUDIO IN UGANDA.

design curricula. It has quickly become a powerful draw for students hungry for real-world experience.

In a global service course, students travel abroad to engage in an actual built project while living and working with a developing community. The result is a rich synergy of shared insight and community outreach woven around a design-build experience. The students share their skills and energy with the host community in exchange for insight into some of the world's most pressing issues.

Journey to Katebo

What happens if you take 11 university students, varied in age, education and life experience, and send them to live and work together in rural Uganda for a month, without running water or electricity? I realized that it was best not to speculate.

—Marla Wirasinghe, service-learning participant

In May of 2008, University of Manitoba professor Kelley Beaverford left for Uganda with a team of student designers. Arrangements had been made to partner with teachers, contractors, and a local NGO in creating a library for Katebo, a rural village decimated by the AIDS pandemic. Katebo is survived by large numbers of orphaned children who must provide for themselves, often without material assets of any kind. Everyone in the village works very hard to subsist, as Izak Bridgman noted: “The community, the children, wherever we went, had a dream, a hope for something they were working towards. There was death and poverty but no sense of decay or even urgency.”

Staying in an unfinished building affectionately called the Big House, the team settled into what would be their home for the next month. With 11 students, two instructors, and a squat toilet, the level of amenity left something to be desired. Suddenly liberated from private rooms,

running water, electricity, and eventually iPods, students could begin to negotiate the existing disparity between life in the village and their own lives in Canada. As student Jocelyn Tanner noted, “In Katebo there was a much stronger link between the weather and our daily routines. Our hygiene depended on the rain and the success of our project depended mostly on the sun.”

The participants’ schedule was intense: they would rise at 6:30am and then meet to discuss the day’s agenda over a breakfast of tea and bread. From 8:00am to 5:45pm, they would work in two-hour shifts, rotating from design to construction to community service, regrouping at lunch to review their progress. In a given day, each participant shared roles in several categories of work, and was responsible for teaching his or her successor at a given station how to proceed. By 6:00pm, the tools were packed away in advance of dusk; a seminar followed to introduce new concepts and to reflect on the day. Weekends were reserved for field trips.

Why Did the Army Ants Cross the Road?

There was no shortage of unforeseen incidents that would later become legendary from the relative comfort of the Canadian coffee table.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT WITHOUT ELECTRICITY, ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS LEARNED TO BUILD A NEW LIBRARY THROUGH LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND TEAMWORK; EACH DAY, PARTICIPANTS WOULD SHARE ROLES ON A VARIETY OF CONSTRUCTION JOBS, TEACHING EACH OTHER HOW TO PROCEED; TYING REBAR BY HAND; STUDENTS LEARNED HOW TO MANUALLY CUT AND CHISEL VARIOUS MILLWORK DETAILS; SPENDING TIME WITH SOME OF THE LOCAL CHILDREN WAS ONE OF THE STUDIO’S HIGHLIGHTS.



KELLEY BEAVERFORD



MATTHEW MCETRICK



MARIA VIRASINGHE



DERRICK FINCH



JOSHUA ADRIA



ABOVE, TOP TO BOTTOM MIXING MORTAR BY HAND, LOCAL YOUTH LEARN ABOUT MASONRY CONSTRUCTION; A LOCAL UGANDAN POSES IN FRONT OF HIS HANDIWORK; STUDENTS REVIEW THE PROGRESS OF THE LIBRARY'S CONSTRUCTION AT THE END OF A DAY'S WORK.

Site Uncertainty

More unpredictable than the wildlife were the arrival times for project building materials. "Uganda time," recalls Bridgman, "became a joke, a source of laughter, frustration, resentment, acceptance. Water, money, group members, seemed to hang in a mysterious limbo halfway between a promise and arrival." A litany of setbacks and frictions necessitated inventive ad hoc solutions. Water had to be hauled from Lake Victoria in jerry cans. Lumber arrived on uneven roads, precariously balanced in the arms of two *bazungu* (Lugandan word for white people from the singular *muzungu*) perched and swaying on either side of a dirt bike. The restraints of standard operating procedure in rural Uganda required rethinking Western notions of material and execution, as Wirasinghe illustrates: "You begin to realize that without a backhoe, it takes over a week to haul enough dirt to fill in a shallow foundation. Even making concrete requires chipping your own gravel and pushing bags of cement on the back of a bicycle. Each wheelbarrow load, each swing of a hoe gives you a stronger understanding of the materials and connection to the process of making." Also, building furniture strictly with hand tools brought participants closer to the community's actual experience of fabrication. "I won't ever forget the feeling of shame at the beginning of the day and the feeling of triumph as I made a perfect cut...Uganda gave me my hands," says Bridgman.

The project budget became a lens through which to explore how the community worked around the challenge of limited means. In addition to donated tools, each course participant had contributed \$300 to the cost of the library's construction; the modest total left little room for special equipment. Wirasinghe reflects on how this guided the design: "It is about trying to improve what already exists rather than creating something completely new...if something has been done a certain way for a long time, there is probably a reason for it." Vernacular forms made possible a meeting of minds, a shared architectural language that both the community and the participants could understand without making project costs unrealistic.

The Bricks and Mortar of Reciprocal Learning

From initial impressions, one might assume that rural Ugandan building practices were less advanced than their Canadian equivalents. As James Frank remarked, "It took me forever to get used to the idea of how much mortar to use. It seemed at first a ridiculous amount in comparison to what we see around home." In working within Katebo's everyday challenges, the team grew to understand how local methods, skills and knowledge were specifically adapted to Katebo's situation. Side-by-side contact with the engineers and local subcontractors was particularly illuminating in this regard; their familiarity with the challenge of designing without site services and utilities was well developed, as was their knowledge of low-cost masonry construction and climatic factors. They knew, for example, how to use, dismantle, and reuse readily available materials like bamboo and twine to great effect, creating scaffolding that was harvested from the jungle nearby. Many participants were equally impressed by the quick and complex wire knot they used in tying rebar: fittingly, it didn't require gloves or special equipment.

Cultural perceptions of vernacular buildings were also exchanged, along with discussions on what the library could and should be. "I really liked the fact that this course placed a significant emphasis on the fundamental role of the community in the design process," said Derrick Finch. Based on their collective upbringing, the design team had a strong initial sense of what was needed, envisioning a place where books could be stored and read. However, in working with Katebo's children, teachers, and a women's empowerment group, these ideas evolved. Given that the library would have very few books, it was determined that the space would be better utilized as a community activity centre. Additionally, government regulations required that primary-level exams had to be written in an enclosed space: the need for a sanctioned exam-writing hall was emphasized. Another unanticipated

Contradictory rumours circulated about an unidentified hairy birdlike creature with alternately giant and beady eyes that laid in wait for unsuspecting students inside the pit latrine. From the 14-foot-long python found in the woods to strident warnings about 89, a giant crocodile named after the number of human skulls found in its lair, Africa did not disappoint. After one particularly harrowing episode, student Josh Adria recounted the situation with particular clarity: "I was comfortable with, and actually quite fascinated by the ants when they were crossing the road, but the sight of something that terrifies me (spiders) terrified by something else (ants) was entirely more than I was prepared for."

need was for a vaccination treatment space and medical checkup centre. It would become one of the only flexible community spaces available and a variety of uses had to be considered.

“Work within the evolution of an object rather than trying to recreate the object every time,” advised professor Karl Burkheimer. One-sided innovation gave way to sensitive analyses of the larger village needs and traditions. As Canadians, the course participants initially focused on the interior, assuming that the facility would end where the walls stood. In Katebo, however, the most affordable and important spaces are shared with the outside. Public assemblies and classrooms with overflow into the outer courtyard were seen as very desirable. By enlarging the building’s veranda, the community gained a low-cost way of extending space for public use. Again and again, preconceived notions of the program had to be dismantled and revised to uncover adaptive solutions.

Outcome

How does real change begin? The core of the experience in Katebo was the mutual exchange of disparate ways of life and the cultivation of new relationships facilitated by a shared goal. Displacement within a different social reality intensifies the learning experience. It imparts a visceral perspective from which a participant can begin to take a new direction guided by first-hand knowledge and personal conviction. It is an experience that is beyond the capacity of a classroom lecture to convey. In this regard, the built project in its various stages of resolution becomes a catalyst for change—in the students, in the design professions, and in the world itself. **CA**

Special thanks to the community of Katebo, the builders, Professor Karl Burkheimer, Professor Leland Hill, and students Joshua Adria, Izak Bridgman, Derrick Finch, James Frank, Rachelle Lemieux, Andrew Lovatt, Matthew McFetrick, Laura Rempel, Kate Snyder, Jocelyn Tanner and Marla Wirasinghe.



MATTHEW MCFETRICK

ABOVE GRATEFUL FOR THEIR NEW LIBRARY, THE CHILDREN OF KATEBO WAVE GOODBYE TO THE ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA.

Kelley Beaverford is a professor in the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Manitoba. She has been involved with numerous projects in Africa and Asia as the Executive Director of Architects Without Borders (AWB) Canada. Stewart Morgan is a freelance writer and filmmaker with a background in architecture and anthropology. He has contributed to several AWB projects.

Three large, dark, weathered Moai statues stand in a row on a grassy hill. The statues are carved from dark stone and have large, rectangular heads with prominent noses and deep-set eyes. They are positioned against a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The ground in front of the statues is covered in green grass and some low-lying plants. The overall scene is peaceful and majestic.

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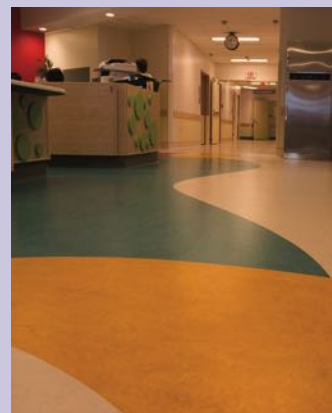


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Total Environnement: Montréal, 1965-1975

March 19-August 23, 2009 This exhibition takes place at the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal, and traces the origins and lasting influence of the notion of total environment created by ephemeral architecture in Montreal during the 1960s and '70s through video projections, films, objects, publications, posters, and archival materials.
www.cca.qc.ca

Logotopia: The Library in Architecture, Art and the Imagination

March 20-May 3, 2009 This exhibition at the Central Gallery in Regina explores the library in its various typologies—the universal library, the national library, the community library, and the private library, and presents thematically related objects of art, literature, new media and pop culture. Featured architects include Hariri Pontarini Architects, Kongats Architects Inc., Patkau Architects, Shigeru Ban

Architects, Shim-Sutcliffe Architects, and Snøhetta Architects.

Ali Rahim lecture

April 23, 2009 Ali Rahim of Contemporary Architecture Practice in New York delivers a lecture at 6:00pm in Room 2160 of the Professional Faculty Building at the University of Calgary.

Niagara Falls

April 23, 2009 Barbara Penner delivers this lecture at 7:00pm at the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal.

Raqs Media Collective: Urban Field Speakers Series

April 30, 2009 This Delhi-based collective of artists, curators and researchers speaks on its uncanny transformations of the urban field at the Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art in Toronto at 7:30pm.
www.prefix.ca/specev.html

2009 Festival of Architecture and Design

May 1-31, 2009 Toronto celebrates the fifth year of the Festival of Architecture and Design (fAd), offering an entire month of activities and events by the architecture and design-related communities such as exhibitions, films, lectures, book launches, readings and walking tours.
www.toronto.ca/fad/

LIGHTFAIR International

May 5-7, 2009 Taking place at the Javits Convention Center in New York, the LFI conference program brings together the foremost designers, educators, architects, engineers and consultants to address topics that cover lighting fundamentals, software, applications, controls and solutions, as well as design innovation, product updates and case studies.
www.lightfair.com

12th Canadian Conference on Building Science and Technology

May 6-8, 2009 Hosted by the Quebec Building Envelope Council and organized by the National Building Envelope Council, this conference

will be held at the Montreal Convention Centre.
www.cebq.org/NBEC.htm

Phyllis Lambert: Urban Field Speakers Series

May 14, 2009 The Founding Director and Chair of the Canadian Centre for Architecture speaks on the history and role of this venerable institution at the Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art in Toronto at 7:30pm.
www.prefix.ca/specev.html

National Engineering Summit

May 19-21, 2009 This summit in Montreal will introduce delegates to the current conditions within the streams of health, environment, safety and security, competitiveness in a global economy, and quality of life.
www.engineeringsummit.ca

From Theory into Practice: Thinking Critically About Architecture, History and Theory

May 20-24, 2009 The Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada's 36th annual conference takes place at Ryerson University in Toronto, and is co-chaired by George Kapelos and Sharon Vattay. The goal of the 2009 conference is to stimulate debate and discussion on the role of history and theory in the making of architecture in Canada.
www.canada-architecture.org/conference09.php

SIDIM 2009: Montreal International Interior Design Show

May 21-23, 2009 Place Bonaventure will host the 21st edition of the Montreal International Interior Design Show, presenting the latest trendsetting ideas, green materials, new products and top designers and design companies. Three hundred exhibitors from across Canada, the United States and Europe will be in attendance.
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CULTURAL CONTAINMENT



A TEMPORARY "GALLERY" HOUSING ART AND VIDEO ALLOWED AN INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM TO BLUR THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN DANCE, CHOREOGRAPHY AND SPORT IN ADVANCE OF THE VANCOUVER 2010 WINTER OLYMPICS.

TEXT IAN CHODIKOFF
PHOTO IAIN SINCLAIR

The idea of adaptively reusing shipping containers is not a new concept. For several years, they have been incorporated into a variety of building projects, such as the monumental yet ephemeral Nomadic Museum designed by Japanese architect Shigeru Ban on Manhattan's Chelsea Pier in 2005, and the fanciful pods of inhabitation borne from repurposed containers, courtesy of fashionable New York firm LO-TEK.

A recent public art installation in front of the Vancouver Public Library proves that recycling old shipping containers remains a seductive idea. Known as *containR*, two overlapping steel boxes were converted over a 10-day period in late February to become a "nomadic gallery" or theatre space for the purpose of displaying art and projecting video. Now dismantled, the project was part of the Vancouver 2009 Cultural Olympiad, a series of multidisciplinary festivals and digital programs that will culminate in a 60-day event taking place before and throughout the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games to be held

in Whistler and Greater Vancouver next year. The installation was presented in conjunction with Springboard, a non-profit organization with a 20-year history of producing artist-run initiatives through multimedia presentations in the public realm, often involving dance and choreographed activities.

With backgrounds in film, new media, dance and choreography, artistic directors Nicole Mion and Evann Siebens curated the film and art for *containR*, in addition to commissioning Vancouver artists the dark and Zak David (a.k.a. Virus) to paint graffiti- and tag-inspired artwork on the installation's many surfaces. Robert Duke of Duke Architecture and industrial designer Keith Doyle of the environmental design firm IF (Intelligent Forms Design Inc.) designed the portable installation. Duke, a graduate of Carleton University's School of Architecture, began his career in Calgary designing furniture and interiors before finally settling in Vancouver where he recently started up his own design

LEFT SITED ON A CORNER OF THE VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY PLAZA, *CONTAINR* EXPRESSED IDEAS OF MOVEMENT AND CULTURE THROUGH REPURPOSED SHIPPING CONTAINERS.

firm. Doyle is an industrial designer whose firm has been developing a range of workplace-related furniture items. Iain Sinclair of Kindred Construction helped manage the construction of the project.

Designed, developed and built by an interdisciplinary collaborative of visual artists, architects and builders, *containR* challenges our perceptions of dance, sport and movement. A screen and video projector were housed inside the double-height portable theatre whose upper portion cantilevered out 10 feet, creating a canopy over the entrance. Both pedestrians and motorists were able to view a monitor showing a documentary of the construction and modification of the containers as they walked or drove by the site. Photovoltaic panels were integrated into the design to help supply the electricity needed to power the videos and lighting.

The interdisciplinary team's approach certainly responded to the challenge of the Cultural Olympiad's three tenets: sport, art and sustainability. The intention behind *containR* was to ask questions like "Where is the line between art and sport?" and "How does a dance performance differ from a snowboarder's performance on the slopes?" Visitors were given the opportunity to draw their own conclusions by watching a series of videos. Despite receiving the commission from Vancouver Cultural Olympiad organizers in September 2008, the *containR* team was given a budget of less than 50 percent of the actual construction cost. The remaining costs were financed through additional sponsors. The future prospects of *containR* remain in discussion, but the team members hope that subsequent versions will be refined to allow the plywood prow (see photo) to be finished in metal with a large television screen. They also hope that *containR* will grow to encompass a gallery and retail space along with live performances for the 2010 Olympic festivities next year. **CA**

For more information, please visit www.containr.com.

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